

2002 Women of Our World

In the last decade, the situation of women has moved to the forefront of national and international policy debates. While the last half-century has seen major gains in women's health, education, and rights, progress has been slow or uneven in many areas. Gender inequality, or disparities between men and women, is still pronounced in the poorest regions and countries of the world. This Population Reference Bureau data sheet catalogs the status of women in 168 countries with a focus on demography, reproductive health, education, economic status, and political leadership.

See topic area for overview and world region for data.

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Demographic Profile

For any given country, the ratio of women to men in the population results from differences in women's and men's death rates and migration patterns, as well as sex ratios at birth. For biological reasons, boys slightly outnumber girls at birth but have higher mortality; as they age (and as populations grow older), women tend to equal or out-number men in the population.

In a few regions, mainly in Asia, a deficit of women relative to men stems from various forms of lifelong discrimination against girls and women—particularly inferior nutrition and health care early in life and during the childbearing years. In a few countries, the sex ratio at birth deviates markedly in favor of boys, because a strong traditional preference for sons places girls at risk of sex-selective abortions or infanticide. In some countries, infant girls are less likely to survive than infant boys because of discrimination and neglect (see table).

Table

Deaths in the First Year of Life Among Girls and Boys, Selected Countries

Deaths under age 1 per 1,000 live births, 1995–2000

Country	Girls	Boys
Burkina Faso	96	102
Zimbabwe	65	73
Egypt	47	53
Brazil	36	48
United States	6	8
Nepal	84	81
Bangladesh	79	78
India	78	67
Papua New Guinea	64	59
China	48	35

Source: United Nations, *The World's Women 2000 Trends and Statistics*.

Infant girls survive in greater numbers than infant boys almost everywhere, but in a few countries gender discrimination and neglect outweigh girls' biological advantage.

From 2002 to 2020, the number of women of reproductive age (15-49) in less developed countries will grow by 24 percent. (Excluding China, the number will grow by 34 percent.) Though fertility rates—the number of births per woman—in these countries have fallen considerably in recent decades, the relatively high fertility of past decades has meant growing numbers of young women are now beginning their reproductive years. Even if these women have fewer children than their mothers did, the absolute number of children born will continue to rise for some years to come.

Women have higher life expectancy than men and therefore make up the majority of the elderly population in almost every country. Women spend a much larger part of their old age without partners than do men, because they tend to marry older men and live longer. Elderly women are also more likely to be living in poverty than elderly men. In many countries, elderly women are restricted in their employment opportunities, property rights, and social behavior.

Demography: World

	Total Females (in millions)	Women per 100 Men	Women Ages 15–49 (in millions)		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Total Fertility Rate
	2002	2002	2002	2020	Female	Male	
WORLD	3,083	99	1,594	1,873	69	65	2.8
More Developed	614	106	298	268	79	72	1.6
Less Developed	2,469	97	1,296	1,605	66	63	3.2
Less Developed (Excl. China)	1,836	98	939	1,261	64	61	3.6

Demography: Africa

	Total Females (in millions)	Women per 100 Men	Women Ages 15–49 (in millions)		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Total Fertility Rate
	2002	2002	2002	2020	Female	Male	
AFRICA	416	100	197	304	55	52	5.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	343	101	158	195	52	49	5.6
Northern Africa	89	98	47	63	67	64	3.6
Algeria	15.5	97	8.4	11.1	70	68	3.1
Egypt	34.7	98	18.2	24.3	68	65	3.5
Libya	2.7	93	1.5	2.1	77	73	3.9
Morocco	15.5	100	8.3	10.8	71	67	3.4
Sudan	16.2	99	7.9	12	57	55	4.9
Tunisia	4.8	98	2.7	3.1	74	70	2.3
Western Africa	118	99	54	90	52	50	5.8
Benin	3.4	103	1.6	2.6	51	49	6.3
Burkina Faso	6.3	106	2.7	5	47	47	6.8
Cape Verde	0.2	114	0.1	0.2	72	65	4
Côte d'Ivoire	8.1	95	3.9	6	47	45	5.2
Gambia	0.7	102	0.3	0.5	54	51	5.9
Ghana	10.1	101	5	7.6	59	56	4.3
Guinea	4.2	99	1.9	3.1	47	43	5.5
Guinea-Bissau	0.6	103	0.3	0.5	46	44	5.8
Liberia	1.6	99	0.8	1.5	52	49	6.6
Mali	6.1	102	2.6	4.6	47	45	7
Mauritania	1.4	102	0.7	1.1	52	49	4.7
Niger	5.8	98	2.5	4.8	41	41	7.5
Nigeria	59.5	98	27.2	45.2	53	52	5.8
Senegal	5	101	2.3	3.8	54	51	5.2
Sierra Leone	2.4	103	1.1	1.9	47	42	6.3
Togo	2.4	101	1.1	1.8	58	53	5.8
Eastern Africa	132	101	60	97	51	49	5.7
Burundi	3.4	105	1.5	2.6	47	46	6.5
Comoros	0.4	99	0.2	0.3	59	54	6.8
Djibouti	0.3	112	0.2	0.2	48	44	6.1
Eritrea	2	101	0.9	1.6	57	53	6
Ethiopia	33.2	101	14.9	23.6	53	51	5.9
Kenya	16	101	7.9	11.4	49	48	4.4
Madagascar	8.5	101	3.9	6.7	56	52	5.8
Malawi	5.9	101	2.6	4.1	40	39	6.3
Mauritius	0.6	101	0.3	0.3	74	67	2
Mozambique	9.6	102	4.4	6.3	76	69	5.6
Reunion	0.4	105	0.2	0.2	79	70	2.3
Rwanda	4.1	102	1.9	2.9	40	39	5.8
Somalia	4.8	101	2.1	4.1	48	45	7.3
Tanzania	18.5	101	8.7	14.1	54	52	5.6
Uganda	12.4	100	5.3	10.3	43	42	6.9

Demography: Africa

Continued

Zambia	5.4	99	2.4	4	38	37	6.1
Zimbabwe	6.5	100	3	4.6	39	41	4
Middle Africa	51	102	22	40	50	46	6.6
Angola	7	102	3	5.4	39	37	6.9
Cameroon	7.8	101	3.6	5.6	56	55	5.2
Republic	2	105	0.9	1.4	46	43	5.1
Chad	4.2	102	1.9	3.3	52	48	6.6
Congo	1.6	104	0.7	1.3	52	47	6.3
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	27.4	102	11.5	22.2	50	45	7
Equatorial Guinea	0.2	102	0.1	0.2	52	48	5.9
Gabon	0.7	102	0.3	0.5	54	51	4.3
Southern Africa	26	103	13	13	53	51	3.1
Botswana	0.8	104	0.4	0.5	42	41	3.9
Lesotho	1	101	0.5	0.5	55	52	4.3
Namibia	0.9	102	0.4	0.6	45	47	5
South Africa	22.4	103	12	11.4	54	52	2.9
Swaziland	0.5	102	0.2	0.3	41	40	5.9

Demography: North America

	Total Females (in millions)	Women per 1000 Men	Women Ages 15–49 (in millions)		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Total Fertility Rate
	2002	2002	2002	2020	Female	Male	
NORTH AMERICA	162	103	80	83	80	74	2
Canada	15.8	102	8	7.8	81	76	1.4
United States	146.2	103	72.2	75.2	80	74	2.1

Demography: Latin America and the Caribbean

	Total Females (in millions)	Women per 1000 Men	Women Ages 15–49 (in millions)		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Total Fertility Rate
	2002	2002	2002	2020	Female	Male	
LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN	270	102	145	174	74	68	2.8
Central America	70	101	37	48	76	71	3.1
Belize	0.1	97	0.1	0.1	74	70	3.2
Costa Rica	2.1	97	1.1	1.4	79	75	2.6
El Salvador	3.3	104	1.7	2.3	73	67	3.5
Guatemala	6	98	2.8	4.7	68	63	4.8
Honduras	3.3	99	1.6	2.6	68	64	4.4
Mexico	51.5	102	27.9	33.7	78	73	2.8
Nicaragua	2.7	101	1.3	2.1	70	66	4.3
Panama	1.5	98	0.8	0.9	76	72	2.6
Caribbean	19	101	10	11	71	66	2.6
Bahamas	0.2	103	0.1	0.1	75	70	2.4
Cuba	5.6	100	3	2.6	77	73	1.6
Dominican Republic	4.3	97	2.3	2.7	71	67	3.1
Haiti	4.3	104	2.1	3	51	47	4.7
Jamaica	1.3	103	0.7	0.8	73	70	2.4
Trinidad and Tobago	0.7	101	0.4	0.4	73	68	1.7
South America	180	102	97	115	73	67	2.6
Argentina	19.3	104	9.5	11.5	77	70	2.6
Bolivia	4.4	101	2.1	3.2	64	60	4.2
Brazil	88.5	103	49.6	55.2	72	65	2.4
Chile	7.9	102	4.1	4.6	78	72	2.3
Colombia	22	103	11.9	14.5	74	68	2.6
Ecuador	6.5	99	3.5	4.5	73	68	3.3
Guyana	0.4	106	0.2	0.2	68	62	2.5
Paraguay	2.9	98	1.4	2.2	76	71	4.3
Peru	13.4	102	7.2	9.1	71	66	2.9
Suriname	0.2	102	0.1	0.1	74	68	3
Uruguay	1.7	106	0.8	0.9	78	70	2.3
Venezuela	12.5	99	6.6	8.6	76	70	2.9

Demography: Asia

	Total Females (in millions)	Women per 100 Men	Women Ages 15–49 (in millions)		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Total Fertility Rate
	2002	2002	2002	2020	Female	Male	
ASIA	1,844	96	981	1,149	68	65	2.7
Asia (Excl. China)	1,215	96	627	807	66	63	3.2
Western Asia	96	96	49	70	69	66	3.9
Armenia	2	107	1.1	1	76	71	1.1
Azerbaijan	4.1	103	2.3	2.3	75	68	2
Bahrain	0.3	74	0.2	0.2	75	70	2.8
Cyprus	0.4	100	0.2	0.2	79	75	1.8
Georgia	2.7	109	1.4	1.1	77	69	1.2
Iraq	11.9	97	5.8	9.5	60	58	5.3
Israel	3.2	103	1.6	2	80	76	3
Jordan	2.5	93	1.3	2	71	69	3.6
Kuwait	0.8	72	0.5	0.7	73	72	4.2
Lebanon	1.8	104	1	1.2	73	68	2.5
Oman	1.3	89	0.6	1.1	73	69	6.1
Qatar	0.2	56	0.1	0.1	74	69	3.9
Saudi Arabia	10.1	88	4.6	8.8	69	66	5.7
Syria	8.4	97	4.3	6.8	70	70	4.1
Turkey	34	98	18.3	22	71	67	2.5
United Arab Emirates	0.9	52	0.5	0.7	76	71	3.5
Yemen	10	100	4.2	8.7	61	57	7.2
South Central Asia	745	95	381	515	62	60	3.4
Afghanistan	11.3	94	5.2	9.2	44	46	6
Bangladesh	69.5	94	35.7	52	59	59	3.3
Bhutan	1.1	98	0.5	0.9	66	66	5.6
India	504.5	94	260.2	337.3	61	60	3.2
Iran	35.4	96	18.8	25.7	71	69	2.6
Kazakhstan	8.3	106	4.5	4.2	71	60	1.8
Kyrgyzstan	2.6	104	1.4	1.7	72	65	2.4
Maldives	0.2	95	0.1	0.1	63	60	5.8
Nepal	11.8	95	5.6	8.9	57	58	4.1
Pakistan	72.4	95	34.1	56.4	61	60	5.6
Sri Lanka	9.4	95	5.3	5.5	74	70	2.1
Tajikistan	3.1	101	1.6	2.1	71	66	2.4
Brunei	0.2	90	0.1	0.1	76	71	2.7
Cambodia	7	105	3.3	5.2	58	54	4
Indonesia	108.4	99	59.3	70	70	65	2.7
Laos	2.8	100	1.3	2.1	54	51	5.4
Malaysia	11.4	98	6	7.8	75	70	3.2
Myanmar	24.6	101	13.2	16.2	57	54	3.3
Philippines	39	99	20.1	27.8	70	64	3.5
Singapore	2.1	99	1.2	1	80	76	1.6

Demography: Asia

Continued

	Total Females (in millions)	Women per 100 Men	Women Ages 15–49 (in millions)		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Total Fertility Rate
	2002	2002	2002	2020	Female	Male	
China, Hong Kong SAR	3.5	97	2	1.9	82	77	1
Japan	65.2	104	28.9	25	84	77	1.3
Korea, North	11.3	99	5.9	6.3	73	67	2.3
Korea, South	23.6	99	13.5	11.8	78	71	1.5
Mongolia	1.3	100	0.7	0.9	65	61	3.1

Demography: Europe

	Total Females (in millions)	Women per 100 Men	Women Ages 15–49 (in millions)		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Total Fertility Rate
	2002	2002	2002	2020	Female	Male	
EUROPE	375	107	183	154	78	70	1.4
Northern Europe	49	104	23	21	80	74	1.6
Denmark	2.7	102	1.2	1.1	79	74	1.7
Estonia	0.7	115	0.4	0.3	76	65	1.3
Finland	2.7	105	1.2	1.1	81	74	1.7
Ireland	2	101	1	1.1	79	74	1.9
Latvia	1.3	117	0.6	0.5	76	65	1.2
Lithuania	1.9	112	1	0.8	77	67	1.3
Norway	2.3	102	1.1	1	81	76	1.8
Sweden	4.5	102	2	1.8	82	77	1.5
United Kingdom	30.3	103	14	12.8	80	75	1.7
Western Europe	94	104	44	38	81	75	1.6
Austria	4.1	105	2	1.6	81	75	1.3
Belgium	5.2	104	2.4	2.1	81	75	1.6
France	30.6	105	14.4	13.1	83	75	1.9
Germany	41.8	104	19.5	15.7	81	74	1.3
Luxembourg	0.2	103	0.1	0.1	81	75	1.7
Netherlands	8.1	102	3.9	3.5	81	75	1.7
Switzerland	3.6	102	1.7	1.3	83	77	1.5
Eastern Europe	159	112	80	66	74	63	1.2
Belarus	5.4	115	2.8	2.3	74	62	1.3
Bulgaria	4	106	1.9	1.5	75	68	1.2
Czech Republic	5.3	106	2.6	2.2	78	71	1.1
Hungary	5.2	110	2.5	2.1	75	66	1.3
Moldova	2.2	109	1.2	1.1	72	64	1.4
Poland	19.8	106	10.2	8.9	77	68	1.4
Romania	11.4	105	5.8	5.1	74	67	1.3
Russia	76.6	114	39.3	31.7	72	59	1.2
Slovakia	2.8	106	1.5	1.3	77	69	1.3
Ukraine	26.1	115	12.7	10	74	63	1.1
Southern Europe	74	105	36	30	80	74	1.3
Albania	1.5	96	0.8	0.9	75	69	2.8
Bosnia-Herzegovina	2.1	102	1.1	0.9	72	65	1.6
Croatia	2.4	107	1.1	1	77	70	1.4
Greece	5.4	103	2.6	2.2	81	76	1.3
Italy	29.6	106	13.8	10.8	82	76	1.3
Macedonia ^b	1	100	0.5	0.5	75	70	1.9
Malta	0.2	102	0.1	0.1	80	74	1.7
Portugal	5.2	108	2.5	2.2	79	72	1.5
Slovenia	1	106	0.5	0.4	79	72	1.2
Spain	20.4	105	10.2	8.2	82	74	1.2
Yugoslavia	5.3	101	2.6	2.4	75	70	1.6

Demography: Oceania

	Total Females (in millions)	Women per 100 Men	Women Ages 15–49 (in millions)		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)		Total Fertility Rate
	2002	2002	2002	2020	Female	Male	
OCEANIA	16	99	8	9	76	72	2.5
Australia	9.8	101	5	5.2	82	76	1.7
Fiji	0.4	97	0.2	0.2	69	65	3.3
New Zealand	1.9	103	1	0.9	80	74	2
Papua-New Guinea	2.4	92	1.2	1.8	55	56	4.8

Notes:

— Data are unavailable

Italics Data refer to year prior to that indicated

* Data are excluded from regional averages

z Less than 0.5 percent

a Data do not include Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions (SAR)

b Former Yugoslav Republic

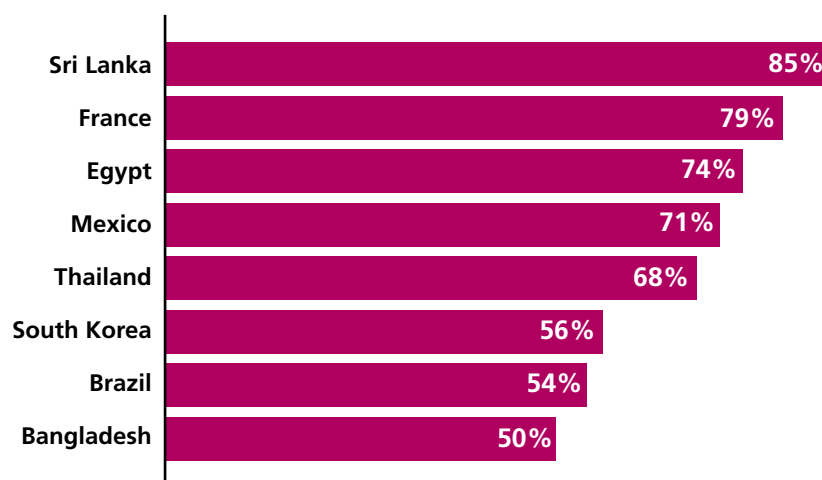
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Economic Status

Women's employment can raise their status by allowing them to earn income and have more control over resources. Women's participation in the labor force has increased in almost all regions of the world. Several factors explain this: Women's use of family planning has enabled them to spend less time on child care and more on work outside the home; attitudes toward the employment of women have become more accepting; and new policies in some countries on family and child care favor working women. In addition, economic growth and the expansion of service industries (like finance, communications, and tourism) that tend to employ large numbers of women have increased women's labor force participation.

These trends are positive, but equality in the workforce is still a long way from reality. Women typically occupy lower-paid, lower-status jobs than men and have higher unemployment rates than men. Far more women than men work in "the informal sector," occupations like street vending and market work, where wages are very low and no other benefits are afforded, such as safety standards, social security, or health insurance. Even when women work in the same sector as men, wages are typically lower (see figure). For many women, working outside the home may not be viewed as a gain in status but as an unwelcome economic necessity.

Women's Wages as a Percentage of Men's Wages in Manufacturing, 1992–1997



Source: United Nations, *The World's Women 2000 Trends and Statistics*.

Women are participating in the labor force in greater numbers, but they typically receive lower pay than men, even when they work in the same sector.

In addition, more women are remaining in the workforce during their reproductive years, leading to a “dual burden”: working outside the home while at the same time doing a larger share of work in the home than men—such as childrearing, cooking, and cleaning. Recent UN conferences have called on governments to reduce disparities between men and women in the workforce and provide additional support to working women, such as maternity leave, child care assistance, and other flexible arrangements.

The proportion of female-headed households is on the rise globally; for a variety of reasons, these households are typically poorer than those headed by men. Female-headed households account for one-quarter or more of households in eastern and southern Africa, the Caribbean, North America, and parts of Europe and Central Asia. Women-headed households result from divorce, widowhood, men’s migration for work, war and other armed conflicts, and unmarried women who begin childbearing. Elderly women living alone account for a growing proportion of female-headed households.

The connections between gender and poverty have attracted more attention recently, because women’s lack of social power and lack of resources can be mutually reinforcing. Unfortunately, most income and poverty data do not reveal how many of those living in poverty are men and how many are women. Nevertheless, a growing body of evidence shows that gender disparities are greatest in the poorest countries and regions, and that promoting gender equality can contribute to greater prosperity.

Economic Status: World

	Percent of Female- Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
		Female	Female	Male	
WORLD	—	57	61	86	6,650
More Developed	—	59	65	81	20,520
Less Developed	—	57	60	87	3,300
Less Developed (Excl. China)	—	51	49	86	3,210

Economic Status: Africa

	Percent of Female-Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
			Female	Male	
AFRICA	—	56	57	86	1,790
Sub-Saharan Africa	—	63	63	87	1,370
Northern Africa	—	30	37	82	3,070
Algeria	11	19	31	80	4,840
Egypt	13	29	37	82	3,460
Libya	—	23	26	78	—
Morocco	15	38	44	83	3,320
Sudan	13	31	35	86	—
Tunisia	11	35	40	83	5,700
Western Africa	—	59	58	87	1,000
Benin	18	78	76	83	920
Burkina Faso	7	83	78	90	960
Cape Verde	38	39	50	90	4,450
Côte d'Ivoire	15	46	45	87	1,540
Gambia	—	71	71	90	1,550
Ghana	37	83	81	82	1,850
Guinea	7	83	80	87	1,870
Guinea-Bissau	—	60	60	91	630
Liberia	19	56	56	83	—
Mali	8	76	74	90	740
Mauritania	—	72	65	88	1,550
Niger	10	74	71	93	740
Nigeria	14	50	50	87	770
Senegal	18	63	63	87	1,400
Sierra Leone	11	45	46	85	440
Togo	26	55	55	87	1,380
Eastern Africa	—	74	73	88	850
Burundi	25	87	86	94	570
Comoros	25	68	64	86	1,430
Djibouti	18	—	—	—	—
Eritrea	31	78	77	87	1,040
Ethiopia	—	60	59	86	620
Kenya	33	78	77	89	1,010
Madagascar	22	73	71	89	790
Malawi	26	81	79	87	570
Mauritius	18	29	42	84	8,950
Mozambique	27	87	84	91	810
Reunion	—	37	54	72	—

Economic Status: Africa

Continued

	Percent of Female-Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
		Female	Female	Male	
Angola	—	78	75	90	1,100
Cameroon	18	50	51	86	1,490
Central African Republic	21	77	68	87	1,150
Chad	22	68	70	89	840
Congo	—	57	59	84	540
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	—	66	63	85	—
Equatorial Guinea	—	48	48	91	3,910
Gabon	—	68	66	86	5,280
Southern Africa	—	48	51	82	8,160
Botswana	47	72	67	84	6,540
Lesotho	—	50	50	85	2,350
Namibia	39	55	57	83	5,580
South Africa	—	47	50	82	8,710
Swaziland	40	42	44	83	4,380

Economic Status: North America

	Percent of Female- Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
			Female	Male	
NORTH AMERICA	—	58	70	82	31,260
Canada	30	57	72	84	25,440
United States	36	58	70	82	31,910

Economic Status: Latin America and the Caribbean

	Percent of Female-Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
		Female	Female	Male	
LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN	—	33	45	86	6,460
Central America	—	31	42	86	6,900
Belize	22	23	30	88	4,750
Costa Rica	20	24	40	85	7,880
El Salvador	27	32	49	87	4,260
Guatemala	20	28	38	89	3,630
Honduras	20	32	42	87	2,270
Mexico	17	31	42	86	8,070
Nicaragua	28	35	50	86	2,060
Panama	22	37	47	83	5,450
Caribbean	—	45	54	84	—
Bahamas	36	58	74	84	15,500
Cuba	—	40	57	85	—
Dominican Republic	25	31	43	87	5,210
Haiti	39	64	58	83	1,470
Jamaica	38	73	75	84	3,390
Trinidad and Tobago	—	40	49	81	7,690
South America	—	33	46	86	6,730
Argentina	22	33	42	84	11,940
Bolivia	24	40	49	84	2,300
Brazil	18	36	47	87	6,840
Chile	25	29	42	82	8,410
Colombia	24	27	51	84	5,580
Ecuador	—	22	34	86	2,820
Guyana	—	30	44	88	3,330
Paraguay	21	34	39	88	4,380
Peru	23	26	36	81	4,480
Suriname	—	27	39	79	3,780
Uruguay	23	37	59	83	8,750
Venezuela	21	32	46	83	5,420

Economic Status: Asia

	Percent of Female- Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
			Female	Male	
ASIA	—	60	62	87	3,930
Asia (Excl. China)	—	50	52	85	4,130
Western Asia	—	39	42	82	4,810
Armenia	—	68	71	78	2,360
Azerbaijan	—	67	61	78	2,450
Bahrain	—	17	34	88	—
Cyprus	14	47	57	88	19,080
Georgia	—	71	66	79	2,540
Iraq	—	16	19	76	—
Israel	—	42	56	79	18,070
Jordan	—	15	28	80	3,880
Kuwait	5	21	42	80	—
Lebanon	—	21	32	81	—
Oman	—	8	20	79	—
Qatar	—	13	38	91	—
Saudi Arabia	—	10	23	82	11,050
Syria	—	24	30	80	3,450
Turkey	10	48	53	85	6,440
United Arab Emirates	—	16	33	89	—
Yemen	12	29	32	84	730
South Central Asia	—	48	47	86	2,250
Afghanistan	—	50	50	88	—
Bangladesh	9	70	68	87	1,530
Bhutan	—	60	60	91	1,260
India	9	48	45	87	2,230
Iran	6	21	30	80	5,520
Kazakhstan	—	71	69	80	4,790
Kyrgyzstan	26	69	68	78	2,420
Maldives	—	63	68	86	—
Nepal	13	59	58	86	1,280
Pakistan	7	28	37	87	1,860
Sri Lanka	—	32	46	82	3,230
Tajikistan	—	68	63	77	—
Turkmenistan	—	70	67	80	3,340
Uzbekistan	22	70	68	78	2,230
Southeast Asia	—	58	64	85	3,210
Brunei	—	31	52	81	—
Cambodia	—	85	85	86	1,350

Economic Status: Asia

Continued

	Percent of Female-Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
			Female	Male	
Indonesia	13	46	58	85	2,660
Laos	—	77	78	90	1,430
Malaysia	18	43	50	81	7,640
Myanmar	—	70	68	90	—
Philippines	11	46	51	83	3,990
Singapore	—	47	55	84	22,640
Thailand	—	80	78	90	5,950
Vietnam	32	75	78	84	1,860
East Asia	—	72	77	89	5,750
China ^a	—	76	80	90	3,550
China, Hong Kong SAR	27	51	57	85	22,570
Japan	17	52	62	85	25,170
Korea, North	—	66	67	85	—
Korea, South	17	50	58	80	15,530
Mongolia	—	76	77	86	1,610

Economic Status: Europe

	Percent of Female- Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
		Female	Female	Male	
EUROPE	—	60	64	80	14,970
Northern Europe	—	61	69	83	21,460
Denmark	42	71	77	85	25,600
Estonia	—	79	74	82	8,190
Finland	42	68	73	77	22,600
Ireland	26	35	44	79	22,460
Latvia	—	78	74	82	6,220
Lithuania	—	75	71	81	6,490
Norway	34	60	74	82	28,140
Sweden	37	69	82	85	22,150
United Kingdom	—	57	67	84	22,220
Western Europe	—	53	61	79	23,840
Austria	—	54	56	79	24,600
Belgium	—	41	52	73	25,710
France	—	55	62	76	23,020
Germany	—	56	62	81	23,510
Luxembourg	26	39	48	76	41,230
Netherlands	—	38	56	79	24,410
Switzerland	28	52	65	91	28,760
Eastern Europe	—	73	70	79	6,770
Belarus	—	74	73	81	6,880
Bulgaria	18	70	71	77	5,070
Czech Republic	26	75	75	83	12,840
Hungary	35	62	61	79	11,050
Moldova	—	75	70	79	2,100
Poland	31	68	66	78	8,390
Romania	22	69	61	77	5,970
Russia	—	75	72	80	6,990
Slovakia	23	69	75	83	10,430
Ukraine	—	74	69	78	3,360
Southern Europe	—	40	52	79	16,520
Albania	—	61	66	86	3,240
Bosnia-Herzegovina	—	37	49	78	—
Croatia	—	53	60	75	7,260
Greece	20	32	48	78	15,800
Italy	—	39	50	79	22,000
Macedonia ^b	—	47	57	77	4,590
Malta	—	23	31	81	—
Portugal	20	53	63	83	15,860
Slovenia	44	67	65	76	16,050
Spain	—	33	48	80	17,850
Yugoslavia	22	51	58	77	—

Economic Status: Oceania

	Percent of Female-Headed Households	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 1980	Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64) 2000		Gross National Income per Capita PPP \$US
		Female	Female	Male	
OCEANIA	—	53	66	84	17,880
Australia	—	52	67	83	23,850
Fiji	12	19	38	83	4,780
New Zealand	37	46	68	83	17,630
Papua-New Guinea	8	71	69	88	2,260

Notes:

— Data are unavailable

Italics Data refer to year prior to that indicated

* Data are excluded from regional averages

z Less than 0.5 percent

a Data do not include Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions (SAR)

b Former Yugoslav Republic

2002 Women of Our World

Education

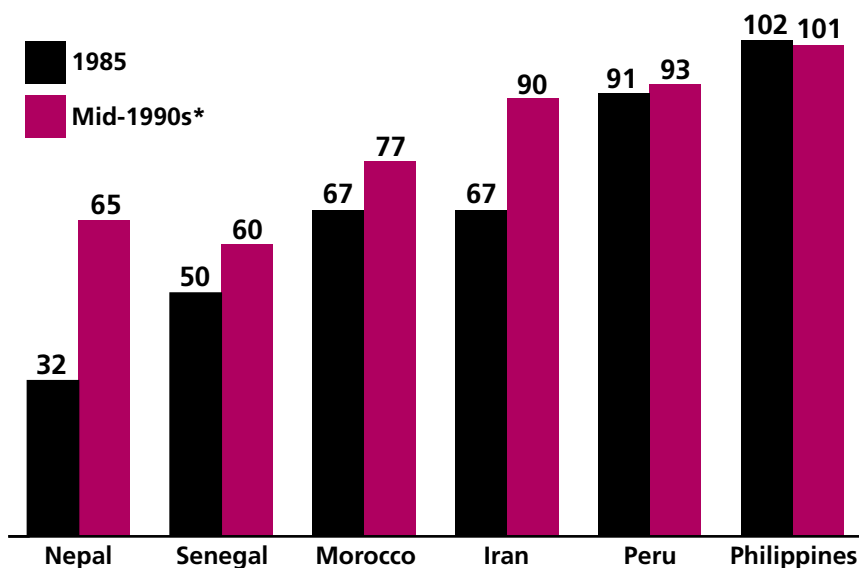
Recent UN conferences have called for universal access to and completion of primary education, and for reducing the “gender gap”—differences in boys’ and girls’ enrollment—in secondary education. Many governments now recognize that female education can foster economic growth and improve the health of women and children. Women with more education have smaller, healthier families because they usually make a later transition into adulthood: They have their first sexual experience later, marry later, want smaller families, and are more likely to use contraception and other health care than their less educated peers.

Primary and secondary school enrollments for both girls and boys increased during the 1990s in almost all regions of the world. The gender gap has closed somewhat in recent years but remains pronounced at the secondary school level. Girls are more likely than boys to discontinue their schooling because of household duties, early marriage and/or childbearing, parents’ perceptions that education is more beneficial for sons, and worries about girls’ safety at school.

During the 1990s, the gender gap in education closed somewhat in countries where girls have historically lagged behind boys—in northern Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, western Asia, and southern Asia (see selected countries in figure on following page). Nevertheless, in regions where almost one-third of the world’s women live (in southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa), the gender gap in education continues to be wide. The populations of these two regions are among the world’s fastest growing, suggesting that the absolute number of illiterate and poorly educated women in these regions will continue to grow.

Gender Gap in Secondary Education, 1985 and Mid-1990s

Females enrolled in secondary school per 100 males



*Latest survey year, 1993–1997.

Source: UNESCO *Statistical Yearbook*, 1999.

Differences in girls' and boys' secondary school enrollments have closed somewhat in recent years, with some notable gains in countries where girls lagged furthest behind.

Education: World

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
WORLD	69	83	43	54	55	63
More Developed	—	—	94	93	102	99
Less Developed	66	81	31	44	47	57
Less Developed (Excl. China)	62	76	33	46	41	51

Education: Africa

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
AFRICA	52	70	23	33	32	38
Sub-Saharan Africa	53	69	18	26	23	29
Northern Africa	47	70	38	54	54	60
Algeria	57	78	44	59	62	65
Egypt	44	67	50	72	73	83
Libya	68	91	57	61	—	—
Morocco	36	62	28	42	34	44
Sudan	46	70	18	24	20	23
Tunisia	61	81	32	46	63	66
Western Africa	45	64	21	33	22	31
Benin	25	57	10	26	11	26
Burkina Faso	14	34	3	6	6	11
Cape Verde	66	85	12	15	56	54
Côte d'Ivoire	39	55	12	28	16	34
Gambia	29	44	10	23	19	30
Ghana	63	80	30	49	28	44
Guinea	27	55	7	18	7	20
Guinea-Bissau	19	60	4	14	—	—
Liberia	38	70	—	—	—	—
Mali	34	49	—	—	8	17
Mauritania	32	53	8	22	11	21
Niger	8	24	3	8	5	9
Nigeria	56	72	28	40	30	36
Senegal	28	47	9	18	12	20
Sierra Leone	23	51	12	24	13	22
Togo	41	75	10	32	14	40
Eastern Africa	54	70	10	16	13	18
Burundi	41	57	2	5	5	8
Comoros	53	67	22	34	19	24
Djibouti	54	76	9	14	12	17
Eritrea	45	67	—	—	17	24
Ethiopia	33	44	10	15	10	14
Kenya	76	89	16	26	22	26
Madagascar	60	74	—	—	16	16
Malawi	47	75	4	8	12	21
Mauritius	81	88	46	51	66	63
Mozambique	29	60	5	10	5	9

Education: Africa

Continued

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Reunion	90	86	—	—	—	—
Rwanda	60	74	5	7	9	12
Somalia	—	—	6	10	—	—
Tanzania	67	85	2	4	5	6
Uganda	57	78	7	13	9	15
Zambia	71	85	14	25	21	34
Zimbabwe	85	93	33	50	45	52
Middle Africa	53	73	15	31	19	31
Angola	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cameroon	70	82	18	28	22	32
Central African Republic	35	60	8	24	6	15
Chad	34	52	2	10	4	15
Congo	74	88	64	87	45	62
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	50	73	13	32	19	32
Equatorial Guinea	74	93	—	—	—	—
Gabon	62	80	—	—	—	—
Southern Africa	85	85	—	—	96	82
Botswana	80	74	31	27	68	61
Lesotho	94	72	28	19	36	25
Namibia	81	83	—	—	67	58
South Africa	85	86	—	—	103	88
Swaziland	79	81	38	40	54	55

Education: North America

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
NORTH AMERICA	—	—	97	97	98	99
Canada	—	—	99	99	105	105
United States	—	—	97	97	97	98

Education: Latin America and the Caribbean

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN	88	89	—	—	—	—
Central America	86	90	54	56	57	56
Belize	93	93	46	39	52	47
Costa Rica	96	96	42	38	52	47
El Salvador	76	82	—	—	39	35
Guatemala	61	76	—	—	25	27
Honduras	75	74	—	—	37	29
Mexico	89	93	55	58	64	64
Nicaragua	70	67	44	21	62	52
Panama	91	93	63	57	65	60
Caribbean	84	84	60	55	55	49
Bahamas	96	95	91	83	90	90
Cuba	97	97	85	80	85	76
Dominican Republic	84	84	57	44	61	47
Haiti	48	52	17	19	20	21
Jamaica	91	83	63	56	67	63
Trinidad and Tobago	98	99	81	81	75	72
South America	89	90	—	—	—	—
Argentina	97	97	74	66	81	73
Bolivia	79	92	36	42	34	40
Brazil	85	85	—	—	—	—
Chile	96	96	70	64	78	72
Colombia	92	92	44	43	69	64
Ecuador	90	93	59	57	50	50
Guyana	98	99	78	73	76	71
Paraguay	92	94	31	32	48	46
Peru	85	95	60	66	67	72
Suriname	93	96	—	—	—	—
Uruguay	98	97	—	—	90	75
Venezuela	92	93	27	21	46	33

Education: Asia

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
ASIA	65	82	35	49	51	62
Asia (Excl. China)	58	75	36	51	44	57
Western Asia	68	86	43	62	48	63
Armenia	98	99	—	—	79	100
Azerbaijan	—	—	95	99	81	73
Bahrain	83	91	97	98	98	91
Cyprus	96	99	89	85	99	95
Georgia	—	—	100	121	76	78
Iraq	46	66	39	68	32	51
Israel	94	98	85	76	87	89
Jordan	84	95	—	—	—	—
Kuwait	80	85	87	95	66	64
Lebanon	80	92	60	61	84	78
Oman	62	80	18	35	66	68
Qatar	83	80	86	79	79	80
Saudi Arabia	67	84	31	48	57	65
Syria	61	88	48	68	40	45
Turkey	77	94	30	52	48	68
United Arab Emirates	79	74	55	55	82	77
Yemen	25	68	—	—	14	53
South Central Asia	45	67	26	46	37	55
Afghanistan	22	52	5	11	12	32
Bangladesh	30	52	11	27	13	25
Bhutan	34	61	—	—	—	—
India	45	68	26	48	39	59
Iran	70	85	36	54	73	81
Kazakhstan	—	—	104	102	91	82
Kyrgyzstan	—	—	107	111	83	75
Maldives	96	96	—	—	71	67
Nepal	24	59	12	37	33	51
Pakistan	21	60	10	24	17	33
Sri Lanka	89	94	66	60	78	72
Tajikistan	99	100	—	—	74	83
Turkmenistan	—	—	—	—	—	—
Uzbekistan	85	93	97	117	88	100

Education: Asia

Continued

Southeast Asia	86	93	40	47	49	53
Brunei	88	95	67	63	82	72
Cambodia	—	—	—	—	17	31
Indonesia	82	92	35	47	48	55
Laos	33	64	19	27	23	34
Malaysia	84	91	53	53	69	59
Myanmar	81	89	22	24	30	29
Philippines	95	96	65	64	78	77
Singapore	88	96	61	63	70	74
Thailand	94	97	—	—	37	38
Vietnam	91	96	41	44	46	48
East Asia	77	92	39	51	70	77
China ^a	76	92	33	46	66	74
China, Hong Kong SAR	90	97	73	69	76	71
Japan	—	—	96	94	104	103
Korea, North	—	—	—	—	—	—
Korea, South	96	99	91	93	102	102
Mongolia	99	99	95	87	65	48

Education: Europe

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
EUROPE	—	—	—	89	102	97
Northern Europe	—	—	—	87	132	117
Denmark	—	—	105	106	122	120
Estonia	—	—	122	116	108	100
Finland	—	—	114	98	125	110
Ireland	—	—	103	93	122	113
Latvia	100	100	—	—	85	82
Lithuania	100	100	—	—	88	85
Norway	—	—	100	95	116	121
Sweden	—	—	93	89	153	128
United Kingdom	—	—	86	82	139	120
Western Europe	—	—	—	—	111	112
Austria	—	—	94	103	102	105
Belgium	—	—	102	101	151	142
France	—	—	94	86	111	112
Germany	—	—	—	—	103	105
Luxembourg	—	—	74	75	90	85
Netherlands	—	—	114	120	129	134
Switzerland	—	—	—	—	—	—
Eastern Europe	99	100	93	92	92	87
Belarus	99	100	—	—	95	91
Bulgaria	98	99	102	101	76	77
Czech Republic	—	—	93	88	100	97
Hungary	99	100	72	72	99	96
Moldova	98	100	89	83	82	79
Poland	100	100	81	76	97	98
Romania	97	99	89	99	78	79
Russia	99	100	98	96	91	83
Slovakia	—	—	—	—	96	92
Ukraine	100	100	—	—	94	88
Southern Europe	96	98	82	80	99	95
Albania	77	92	68	75	38	37
Bosnia-Herzegovina	—	—	—	—	—	—
Croatia	97	99	80	77	83	81
Greece	96	99	89	92	96	95

Education: Europe

Continued

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Italy	98	99	73	74	95	94
Macedonia ^b	—	—	55	65	62	64
Malta	93	91	77	79	82	86
Portugal	90	95	62	53	116	106
Slovenia	100	100	—	—	93	90
Spain	97	99	102	95	123	116
Yugoslavia	—	—	—	—	64	60

Education: Oceania

	Percent Literate (ages 15+) 2000		Percent Enrolled in Secondary School 1985		Secondary School 1993–1997	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
OCEANIA	—	—	67	67	113	111
Australia	—	—	81	79	155	150
Fiji	91	95	51	50	65	64
New Zealand	—	—	87	84	116	110
Papua-New Guinea	57	71	8	15	11	17

Notes:

— Data are unavailable

Italics Data refer to year prior to that indicated

* Data are excluded from regional averages

z Less than 0.5 percent

a Data do not include Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions (SAR)

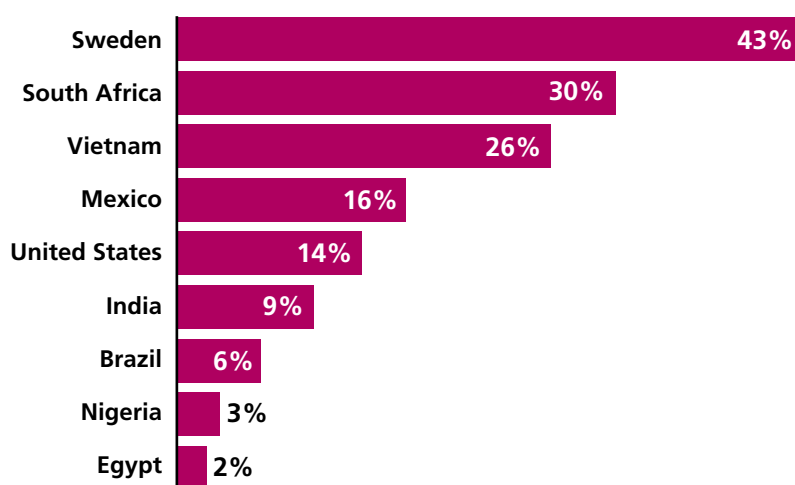
b Former Yugoslav Republic

2002 Women of Our World

Political Leadership

Around the world, women's lack of representation in government, especially high-level ministerial (executive) and legislative bodies, limits their influence over governance and public policies. Worldwide, women held only 14 percent of seats in parliaments in 2001, a slight increase from a decade earlier. In many countries in northern Africa and southern and western Asia, women hold fewer than 10 percent of seats in legislative bodies. There are a small number of exceptions: In Rwanda, Mozambique, Vietnam, and Cuba, women hold more than 25 percent of seats; and in Sweden, women hold 43 percent of parliamentary seats (see figure).

Percent of Parliamentary Seats Held by Women, 2001



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Women in National Parliaments as of October 12, 2001*.

In all but a few countries, women's representation in legislative bodies lags far behind their male counterparts.

Viewed over the long term, women have made some political progress: Over the last century, voting rights have been extended to women in all but a few countries. Women's right to equal participation in political life is guaranteed by a number of international conventions, notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted in 1979 but not ratified by all governments. Women have also become a growing part of the international political landscape, helped in part by the growing influence of women's groups in UN conferences such as the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women. These conferences concluded that more action was needed to increase women's participation in decisionmaking and entry into politics.

Many of the political inroads women have made are due to gender quotas designed to seat more women in legislative bodies, from national parliaments to local village councils. A number of countries, including Brazil, France, India, the Philippines, and Uganda have established such quotas in the last decade. In South Africa, the proportion of women in Parliament rose from 1 percent to 30 percent following the establishment of a new constitution that promoted women's rights.

Leadership: World

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
WORLD	14	11
More Developed	18	14
Less Developed	12	9
Less Developed (Excl. China)	11	9

Leadership: Africa

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
AFRICA	10	9
Sub-Saharan Africa	12	10
Northern Africa	4	—
Algeria	4	5
Egypt	2	5
Libya	—	5
Morocco	1	6
Sudan	10	0
Tunisia	12	8
Western Africa	8	10
Benin	6	10
Burkina Faso	11	10
Cape Verde	11	26
Côte d'Ivoire	9	3
Gambia	2	19
Ghana	9	9
Guinea	9	13
Guinea-Bissau	8	16
Liberia	11	7
Mali	12	16
Mauritania	3	6
Niger	1	8
Nigeria	3	5
Senegal	17	10
Sierra Leone	9	10
Togo	5	7
Eastern Africa	13	10
Burundi	14	5
Comoros	—	4
Djibouti	0	3
Eritrea	15	6
Ethiopia	8	14
Kenya	4	7
Madagascar	8	14
Malawi	9	4
Mauritius	6	—
Mozambique	30	13
Reunion	—	—
Rwanda	26	15
Somalia	—	0
Tanzania	22	12
Uganda	—	13

Leadership: Africa

Continued

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
Zambia	10	10
Zimbabwe	10	9
Middle Africa	10	7
Angola	15	11
Cameroon	6	6
Central African Republic	7	5
Chad	2	4
Congo	12	5
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	—	—
Equatorial Guinea	5	4
Gabon	11	7
Southern Africa	23	15
Botswana	17	19
Lesotho	11	14
Namibia	20	15
South Africa	30	—
Swaziland	6	12

Leadership: North America

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
NORTH AMERICA	18	32
Canada	24	—
United States	14	32

Leadership: Latin America and the Caribbean

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
CARIBBEAN	15	14
Central America	13	12
Belize	14	12
Costa Rica	19	19
El Salvador	10	24
Guatemala	9	10
Honduras	9	15
Mexico	16	7
Nicaragua	10	11
Panama	10	5
Caribbean	22	17
Bahamas	20	36
Cuba	28	9
Dominican Republic	15	14
Haiti	—	9
Jamaica	16	19
Trinidad and Tobago	21	17
South America	12	12
Argentina	21	9
Bolivia	10	8
Brazil	6	12
Chile	9	10
Colombia	12	25
Ecuador	15	9
Guyana	18	19
Paraguay	8	7
Peru	18	20
Suriname	18	13
Uruguay	12	12
Venezuela	10	5

Leadership: Asia

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
ASIA	13	5
Asia (Excl. China)	10	5
Western Asia	6	—
Armenia	3	4
Azerbaijan	10	6
Bahrain	—	1
Cyprus	11	3
Georgia	7	6
Iraq	8	0
Israel	13	7
Jordan	3	1
Kuwait	0	5
Lebanon	2	0
Oman	—	4
Qatar	—	0
Saudi Arabia	—	0
Syria	10	3
Turkey	4	13
United Arab Emirates	0	0
Yemen	1	0
South Central Asia	8	4
Afghanistan	—	0
Bangladesh	—	1
Bhutan	9	5
India	9	—
Iran	3	1
Kazakhstan	11	2
Kyrgyzstan	7	3
Maldives	6	10
Nepal	6	1
Pakistan	—	3
Sri Lanka	4	7
Tajikistan	12	6
Turkmenistan	26	3
Uzbekistan	7	5
Southeast Asia	13	6
Brunei	—	5
Cambodia	9	—
Indonesia	8	2
Laos	21	0
Malaysia	15	14

Leadership: Asia

Continued

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
Myanmar	—	0
Philippines	—	17
Singapore	6	7
Thailand	10	6
Vietnam	26	3
East Asia	20	2
China ^a	22	—
China, Hong Kong SAR	—	—
Japan	—	2
Korea, North	20	—
Korea, South	6	—
Mongolia	11	2

Leadership: Europe

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
EUROPE	18	12
Northern Europe	24	17
Denmark	37	17
Estonia	18	16
Finland	37	16
Ireland	14	11
Latvia	17	25
Lithuania	11	10
Norway	36	23
Sweden	43	31
United Kingdom	17	20
Western Europe	22	9
Austria	25	7
Belgium	25	5
France	11	12
Germany	30	5
Luxembourg	17	16
Netherlands	33	13
Switzerland	22	9
Eastern Europe	11	9
Belarus	18	8
Bulgaria	26	12
Czech Republic	14	14
Hungary	8	11
Moldova	13	11
Poland	—	11
Romania	10	9
Russia	6	5
Slovakia	14	22
Ukraine	8	3
Southern Europe	14	12
Albania	—	11
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5	6
Croatia	16	19
Greece	9	6
Italy	9	10
Macedonia ^b	7	19
Malta	9	7
Portugal	19	11
Slovenia	12	16
Spain	27	7
Yugoslavia	6	7

Leadership: Oceania

	Women as Percent of Parliament Oct. 2001	As Percent Ministerial and Sub- Ministerial Officials 1998
OCEANIA	18	18
Australia	25	17
Fiji	—	15
New Zealand	31	28
Papua-New Guinea	2	5

Notes:

— Data are unavailable

Italics Data refer to year prior to that indicated

* Data are excluded from regional averages

z Less than 0.5 percent

a Data do not include Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions (SAR)

b Former Yugoslav Republic

2002 Women of Our World

Reproductive Health Challenges

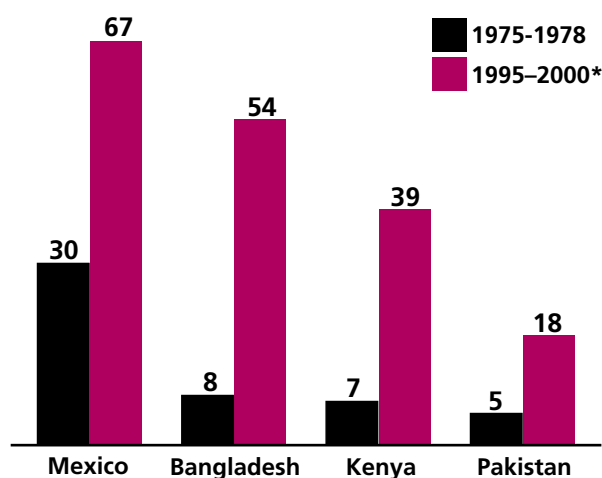
Family Planning

The ability to space and limit childbearing can increase women's autonomy and allow women and men greater control over their lives. Use of family planning also improves health by enabling women to bear children during the healthiest times for themselves and their children. About 57 percent of couples in the less developed world use family planning today, a dramatic increase from earlier decades (see figure 1). This increase in family planning use has brought about a marked and widespread decline in fertility.

Figure 1

Contraceptive Use in Selected Countries, 1970s and 1990s

Percent of married women 15–49 using any method of contraception



*Latest survey year.

Sources: United Nations, *Levels and Trends of Contraceptive Use as Assessed in 1998* ; and Demographic and Health Surveys from 1995-2000.

Contraceptive use has risen nearly everywhere in the developing world, leading to marked declines in fertility.

Still, more than 100 million women in less developed countries would prefer to prevent a future pregnancy but are not using contraception. The reasons may vary. Many women and their husbands fear the side effects of contraceptive methods. Other women are dissuaded by their husbands' disapproval or by family pressure to have more children. Some couples oppose contraception for religious reasons. Difficulties in obtaining contraceptives and a shortage of trained health personnel can restrict access to modern family planning methods.

Studies have shown that providing a range of contraceptive methods, improving interactions between providers and clients, and informing family planning clients about the risks and benefits of contraceptive use can help couples achieve their reproductive goals.

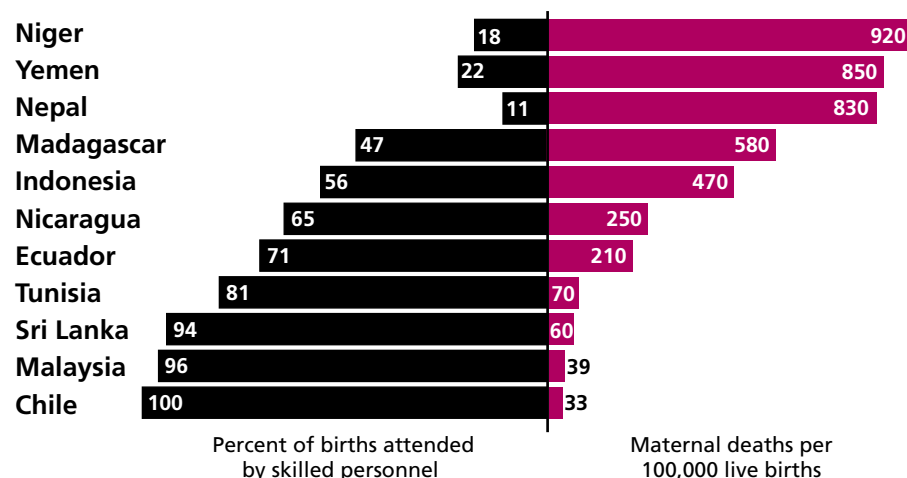
Safe Motherhood

More than 500,000 women die every year from causes related to pregnancy, childbirth, and abortion. Ninety-nine percent of these deaths occur in less developed regions, particularly in Africa and Asia. The ratio of maternal deaths to live births varies greatly throughout the world—from fewer than 10 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in many European countries to more than 1,400 deaths per 100,000 live births in some countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, for every woman who dies, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that about 30 suffer from long-term health problems such as infertility and damage to the reproductive organs.

Though policymakers and health professionals are more aware of the problem and possible solutions than a decade ago, there is no evidence that maternal death rates have declined significantly. Maternal deaths are strongly associated with substandard health services and a lack of medical care during and immediately after childbirth (see figure 2). All pregnant women, even healthy women, face some risk of complications that cannot be predicted in advance but require skilled medical care when they arise. Yet only about half of deliveries in less developed countries take place in the presence of a skilled attendant—a health professional such as a doctor, nurse, or midwife. Women often lack access to well-functioning transportation and health systems that would enable them to reach and obtain appropriate care in the event of life-threatening complications. The WHO estimates that 13 percent of maternal deaths result from complications of abortion. These complications arise from unsafe procedures, which usually occur where abortions are illegal or inaccessible. In countries where abortion is illegal or where safe abortion services are not available, women with unwanted pregnancies may seek clandestine abortion services or abortion drugs and other means of self-induced abortion. Many of these cases lead to injuries that require emergency care.

Figure 2

Skilled Care at Delivery and Maternal Death Ratios, Selected Countries



Sources: UNICEF, End-of-Decade Database; and Demographic and Health Surveys, 1995–2000.

Women's deaths due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth are strongly associated with inadequate medical care at the time of delivery.

HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has had a profound impact on the lives of women, especially those whose economic dependence on men and low social status render them powerless to reject risky behaviors or negotiate preventive actions. Women and girls also provide the main sources of support for those suffering from the disease.

Globally, women account for 48 percent of adults who are infected with HIV/AIDS. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, where HIV is spread mainly through heterosexual activity, women account for 55 percent of adults infected with HIV. The situation is most severe for young women, who are becoming infected in far greater numbers than their male peers (see table).

Young Women and Men Ages 15-24 Living With HIV/AIDS

Estimates as of December 2001

Region	Young women	Young men
Sub-Saharan Africa	5,700,000	2,800,000
South and Southeast Asia	930,000	590,000
Latin America	170,000	260,000
North Africa and Near East	110,000	41,000
East Asia and Pacific	87,000	200,000
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	85,000	340,000
Caribbean	72,000	59,000
North America	47,000	100,000
Western Europe	33,000	55,000
World Total	7,300,000	4,500,000

Source: UNAIDS, Unpublished data, December 2001.

In regions where HIV/AIDS is spread mainly through heterosexual activity, young women are becoming infected in far greater numbers than young men. Adolescent girls are vulnerable for both biological and social reasons.

Young women are especially vulnerable to HIV infection for both biological and social reasons. Physiological differences make transmission of the virus through sexual contact more efficient from men to women than vice versa. Adolescent girls have an immature reproductive tract that makes them even more susceptible to infection. Girls and young women often have sex with older partners who have already been exposed to HIV, and they may lack the knowledge or self-confidence to resist sexual advances or persuade older men to use a condom. Poverty is also a factor, as girls and women may exchange sex for money or gifts. Studies in sub-Saharan Africa have shown that young women are two to six times more likely than young men to contract HIV.

Health experts are advocating ways to combat HIV that take into account the distinct social roles and circumstances of men and women—for example, by giving information and counseling to women to help them gain negotiating skills. Governments and donor agencies are increasingly supporting initiatives that promote the human rights of women, including the right to have control over matters related to their sexuality.

Reproductive Health: World

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
WORLD	60	53	57	400	—	1.1	48
More Developed	73	59	99	21	—	0.3	23
Less Developed	57	51	53	440	—	1.4	50
Less Developed (Excl. China)	47	40	50	—	—	1.9	50

Reproductive Health: Africa

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
AFRICA	26	20	43	1,000	—	6.7	55
Sub-Saharan Africa	19	14	40	—	—	8.6	55
Northern Africa	48	41	68	450	—	0.2	—
Algeria	52	—	77	150	LH	0.1	—
Egypt	56	54	61	170	I	z	—
Libya	49	26	94	120	I	0.1	—
Morocco	58	49	40	390	LH	z	—
Sudan	10	7	86	1,500	IE	1	—
Tunisia	60	49	81	70	L	z	—
Western Africa	15	8	36	1,100	—	4.6	54
Benin	16	3	60	880	I	2.5	55
Burkina Faso	12	5	40	1,400	LH	6.4	55
Cape Verde	53	46	54	190	L	—	—
Côte d'Ivoire	15	7	47	1,200	I	10.8	55
Gambia	15	7	44	1,100	LH	2	—
Ghana	22	13	44	590	LH	3.6	55
Guinea	6	4	35	1,200	LH	1.5	56
Guinea-Bissau	—	—	25	910	I	2.5	56
Liberia	—	—	—	1,000	LH	2.8	57
Mali	7	5	24	630	I	2	55
Mauritania	8	5	53	870	I	0.5	56
Niger	8	5	18	920	I	1.4	56
Nigeria	15	9	33	1,100	I	5.1	54
Senegal	11	8	47	1,200	I	1.8	53
Sierra Leone	—	—	—	2,100	LH	3	55
Togo	24	7	51	980	I	6	55
Eastern Africa	21	16	33	1,300	—	11	56
Burundi	—	—	19	1,900	LH	11.3	56
Comoros	21	11	52	570	LH	0.1	—
Djibouti	—	—	—	520	LH	11.8	54
Eritrea	8	4	21	1,100	LH	2.9	—
Ethiopia	8	6	10	1,800	LH	10.6	55
Kenya	39	32	44	1,300	I	14	55
Madagascar	19	10	47	580	I	0.2	58
Malawi	31	26	56	580	I	16	55
Mauritius	75	60	97	45	I	0.1	—
Mozambique	6	5	44	980	LH	13.2	57

Reproductive Health: Africa

Continued

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
Reunion	73	67	—	39	—	—	—
Rwanda	13	4	31	2,300	LH	11.2	57
Somalia	—	—	—	1,600	I	—	—
Tanzania	25	17	36	1,100	I	8.1	56
Uganda	23	18	38	1,100	I	8.3	55
Zambia	26	14	47	870	L	20	54
Zimbabwe	54	50	73	610	LH	25.1	57
Middle Africa	10	3	—	1,000	—	5.4	55
Angola	—	—	—	1,300	I	2.8	55
Cameroon	19	7	55	720	LH	7.7	56
Republic	15	3	46	1,200	I	13.8	57
Chad	4	1	15	1,500	I	2.7	56
Congo	—	—	—	1,100	I	6.4	55
Rep. of	8	3	—	940	IE	5.1	55
Guinea	—	—	5	1,400	LH	0.5	56
Gabon	33	12	86	620	I	4.2	55
Southern Africa	53	51	81	360	—	20.7	56
Botswana	42	41	87	480	LH	35.8	54
Lesotho	23	19	50	530	I	23.6	54
Namibia	29	26	68	370	LH	19.5	57
South Africa	56	55	84	340	L	19.9	56
Swaziland	21	19	56	370	I	25.3	56

Reproductive Health: North America

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
NORTH AMERICA	77	70	99	11	—	0.6	20
Canada	80	66	100	6	L	0.3	11
United States	76	71	99	12	L	0.6	20

Reproductive Health: Latin America and the Caribbean

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN	70	61	86	190	—	0.6	27
Central America	64	56	78	110 —		0.5	29
Belize	47	44	77	140	L	2	25
Costa Rica	80	72	98	35	LH	0.5	25
El Salvador	60	54	90	180	I	0.6	25
Guatemala	38	31	41	270	I	1.4	39
Honduras	50	41	55	220	I	1.9	50
Mexico	68	59	86	65	IE	0.3	15
Nicaragua	60	57	65	250	I	0.2	25
Panama	—	—	90	100	IE	1.5	41
Caribbean	—	—	85	400	—	2.1	38
Bahamas	—	—	—	10	LH	4.1	32
Cuba	—	—	100	24	L	z	23
Republic	64	59	99	110	I	2.8	45
Haiti	28	22	24	1,100	I	5.2	34
Jamaica	66	63	95	120	LH	0.7	32
Trinidad and Tobago	—	—	—	65	LH	1.1	33
South America	74	64	87	200	—	0.5	23
Argentina	—	—	98	85	LH	0.7	23
Bolivia	48	25	59	550	LH	0.1	17
Brazil	77	70	92	260	IE	0.6	25
Chile	—	—	100	33	I	0.2	17
Colombia	77	63	86	120	I	0.3	14
Ecuador	66	52	71	210	LH	0.3	14
Guyana	—	—	95	150	L	3	33
Paraguay	57	48	71	170	I	0.1	18
Peru	69	50	59	240	LH	0.4	26
Suriname	—	—	—	230	I	1.3	33
Uruguay	—	—	100	50	LH	0.3	25
Venezuela	—	—	95	43	I	0.5	15

Reproductive Health: Asia

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
ASIA	62	56	52	280	—	0.3	34
Asia (Excl. China)	51	43	47	—	—	0.4	36
Western Asia	50	31	70	230	—	z	25
Armenia	61	22	97	29	L	z	20
Azerbaijan	—	—	100	37	L	z	20
Bahrain	62	31	98	38	LH	0.2	—
Cyprus	—	—	100	—	L	0.1	13
Georgia	41	20	—	22	L	z	20
Iraq	—	—	54	370	I	z	—
Israel	—	—	99	8	LH	0.1	29
Jordan	56	39	97	41	LH	z	—
Kuwait	50	41	98	25	LH	0.1	—
Lebanon	61	37	89	130	I	0.1	—
Oman	24	18	91	120	I	0.1	—
Qatar	43	32	98	41	LH	0.1	—
Saudi Arabia	32	29	91	23	LH	z	—
Syria	49	32	76	200	I	z	—
Turkey	64	38	81	55	L	z	—
United Arab Emirates	28	24	99	30	I	0.2	—
Yemen	21	10	22	850	I	z	—
South Central Asia	47	41	38	410	—	0.5	37
Afghanistan	—	—	—	820	I	z	—
Bangladesh	54	43	12	600	I	z	15
Bhutan	—	8	15	500	I	z	—
India	48	43	42	440	L	0.7	37
Iran	73	55	86	130	I	z	—
Kazakhstan	66	53	99	80	L	z	1
Kyrgyzstan	60	49	98	80	L	z	—
Maldives	18	—	90	390	LH	0.1	—
Nepal	39	35	11	830	I	0.3	30
Pakistan	18	13	18	200	LH	0.1	21
Sri Lanka	66	44	94	60	I	0.1	30
Tajikistan	21	—	79	120	L	z	—
Turkmenistan	62	53	97	65	L	z	—
Uzbekistan	56	51	98	60	L	z	—

Reproductive Health: Asia

Continued

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
Southeast Asia	57	49	59	300	—	0.6	36
Brunei	—	—	98	22	I	0.2	—
Cambodia	24	19	32	590	L	4	34
Indonesia	57	55	56	470	I	0.1	25
Laos	25	21	14	650	I	0.1	50
Malaysia	—	—	96	39	LH	0.4	10
Myanmar	33	28	56	170	I	2	35
Philippines	49	32	56	240	I	0.1	42
Singapore	65	—	—	9	L	0.2	20
Thailand	72	70	—	44	LH	2.2	41
Vietnam	75	56	77	95	L	0.2	20
East Asia	81	77	69	55	—	0.1	12
China ^a	83	81	67	60	L	0.1	12
China, Hong Kong SAR	86	—	—	100	LH	0.1	25
Japan	56	48	100	12*	L	z	13
Korea, North	62	53	—	35	L	z	—
Korea, South	79	70	98	20	LH	z	13
Mongolia	60	46	93	65	L	z	—

Reproductive Health: Europe

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15-49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15-49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
EUROPE	74	56	—	28	—	0.3	26
Northern Europe	73	66	—	—	—	0.1	23
Denmark	—	—	100	15	L	0.2	21
Estonia	70	56	—	80	L	z	20
Finland	79	78	100	6	L	0.1	27
Ireland	—	—	100	9	I	0.1	30
Latvia	85	51	100	70	L	0.1	21
Lithuania	66	25	—	27	L	z	20
Norway	—	—	100	9	L	0.1	23
Sweden	—	—	100	8	L	0.1	27
United Kingdom	72	68	—	10	L	0.1	22
Western Europe	81	75	100	—	—	0.2	26
Austria	68	53	100	11	L	0.2	22
Belgium	84	74	100	8	L	0.2	35
France	80	74	99	20	L	0.4	27
Germany	85	79	100	12	L	0.1	20
Luxembourg	—	—	100	—	L	0.2	—
Netherlands	74	71	100	10	L	0.2	20
Switzerland	82	78	—	8	LH	0.5	32
Eastern Europe	67	40	99	—	—	0.3	28
Belarus	50	42	100	33	L	0.3	25
Bulgaria	41	26	—	23	L	z	—
Czech Republic	70	45	99	14	L	z	23
Hungary	73	68	—	23	L	0.1	11
Moldova	74	50	—	65	L	0.2	22
Poland	76	12	99	12	LH	0.1	—
Romania	64	30	99	60	L	z	38
Russia	67	49	99	75	L	0.2	25
Slovakia	74	41	—	14	L	z	13
Ukraine	67	37	100	45	L	1	30
Southern Europe	—	—	—	—	—	0.4	25
Albania	—	—	—	31	L	z	—
Bosnia-Herzegovina	—	—	97	15	L	z	—
Croatia	—	—	100	18	L	z	—
Greece	—	—	—	2	L	0.2	20
Italy	91	56	—	11	L	0.4	32

Reproductive Health: Europe

Continued

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
Macedonia ^b	—	—	97	17	L	z	—
Malta	86	43	98	—	I	0.1	—
Portugal	—	—	98	12	LH	0.7	19
Slovenia	84	54	100	17	L	z	25
Spain	72	71	—	8	LH	0.6	21
Yugoslavia	—	—	93	15	L	0.1	—

Reproductive Health: Oceania

	Percent of Married Women Using Contraception		Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel	Maternal Deaths per 100,000 Live Births	Abortion Policy 2000	Percent of Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS	Percent of Women Among Pop. 15–49 With HIV/AIDS
	Total	Modern				end of 1999	
OCEANIA	61	56	83	260	—	0.1	18
Australia	67	63	100	6*	L	0.2	6
Fiji	—	—	—	20	L	0.1	—
New Zealand	75	72	95	15*	LH	0.1	15
Papua-New Guinea	26	20	53	390	I	0.2	50

Notes:

— Data are unavailable

Italics Data refer to year prior to that indicated

* Data are excluded from regional averages

z Less than 0.5 percent

a Data do not include Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions (SAR)

b Former Yugoslav Republic

Abortion Policy

LH Permitted on physical or mental health grounds, and in some countries, in one or more special cases listed in previous category. Spousal and/or parental consent required in some countries.

I Prohibited, or permitted only to save a woman's life.

IE Permitted only to save a woman's life and in one or more special cases such as rape, incest, or fetal impairment or abnormality. Spousal and/or parental consent required in some countries.

L Permitted on broad socioeconomic grounds or without restriction as to reason, with gestational limits. Certain other restrictions may apply, such as spousal and/or parental consent.

Sources and Definitions

Main Sources

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Definitions

Women per 100 Men: Estimates of the ratio of women to men among the total population.

Life Expectancy at Birth: The average number of years a newborn infant can expect to live under current mortality levels.

Total Fertility Rate: The number of children a woman would have in her lifetime assuming current age-specific birth rates remain constant throughout her childbearing years (usually considered to be ages 15 to 49).

Contraceptive Use: The percentage of currently married or “in-union” women of reproductive age (15–49) who are currently using any form of contraception. “Total” use includes modern and traditional methods. “Modern” methods include clinic and supply methods such as the pill, injectables, implants, IUD, condom, and sterilization. Data refer to the latest survey year through 2001. Data prior to 1995 are shown in italics.

Percent of Births Attended by Skilled Personnel: Skilled personnel include doctors, nurses, and midwives. Data refer to the latest survey year through 2001. Data prior to 1995 are shown in italics.

Maternal Deaths: The number of deaths to women per 100,000 live births that result from conditions related to pregnancy, delivery, and related complications. The estimates for most less developed countries are taken from 1995 consensus estimates of WHO, UNICEF, and UNFPA.

Percent of the Population Ages 15 to 49 With HIV/AIDS: The estimated percentage of adults with HIV/AIDS at the end of 1999.

Percent of Women Among Population 15 to 49 With HIV/AIDS: The estimated percentage of women among adults with HIV/AIDS at the end of 1999.

Male and Female Adult Illiteracy: UNESCO defines illiteracy as those who are able to read but not write, as well as those who can write but not read. Rates of illiteracy are prepared from the data published by UNESCO, based on data from national population censuses or sample surveys.

Percent Enrolled in Secondary School: The ratio of the number of students enrolled in secondary school to the population in the applicable age group (such as 12 to 17 years of age) for the country (gross enrollment ratio). It can exceed 100 when the number of students actually enrolled exceeds the population of the relevant age group. Data refer to the latest survey year from 1993–1997. Data from 1990–1992 are shown in italics.

Percent of Female-Headed Households: Percent of households in which a woman is acknowledged as the “head of household” by other members of the household. Data refer to the latest year through 1997. Data from 1985 to 1990 are shown in italics.

Percent in Labor Force (ages 15–64): Percent of men/women ages 15–64 in the labor force as percent of male/female population ages 15–64.

GNI PPP per Capita (US\$): GNI PPP per capita is 1999 Gross National Income in purchasing power parity (PPP) divided by midyear population. GNI PPP refers to Gross National Income converted to “international dollars” using a purchasing power parity conversion factor. International dollars indicate the amount of goods and services one could buy in the United States with a given amount of money.

Women as Percent of Parliament: Percent of seats in Parliament that are held by women. (Data given are for one legislative chamber, or combined where information for both chambers is accessed.)

As Percent of Ministerial and Sub-Ministerial Officials: Percent of ministerial and sub-ministerial positions held by women (includes ministers, secretaries of state, heads of central banks and of agencies in the cabinet; sub-ministerial level includes deputy and vice ministers or their equivalent, permanent secretaries or their equivalent, and deputy permanent secretaries or their equivalent, such as directors and advisers).

Notes

More developed regions, following the UN classification, comprise all of Europe and North America, plus Australia, Japan, and New Zealand. All other regions and countries are classified as less developed. World and regional totals are weighted averages of countries for which data are available; regional averages are shown when data or estimates are available for at least three-quarters of the region's population. Regional totals may include small countries not shown.

Sub-Saharan Africa: all countries of Africa except the northern African countries of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia.

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